

# OLYMPIC COAST NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

## OLYMPIC COAST DISCOVERY CENTER



V O L U N T E E R   N E W S L E T T E R   -   S E P T E M B E R   2 0 1 1

### Coming Events

**Thursday, September 8**

*Bird Watching with Bob Boekelheide  
of Dungeness River Audubon Center*

Join us at 10:00 to spend an hour or two learning about birds in and around the Port Angeles harbor. We'll meet in the OCDC, and then head out to the beach. Dress for the weather, and bring binoculars or a spotting scope, and a field guide if you have one.



*Report on Thunder Bay  
National Marine Sanctuary*

Following the bird walk, join us at noon in the classroom for the first brown bag lunch of the season. Jim, Trish, Bruce, Gerri and I will share highlights of our trip to Michigan and the Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center. Desserts will be provided as a thank you to volunteers for your help this summer.



**Thursday, October 6**

*Museum at the Carnegie*

Brown bag lunch at noon in the OCDC classroom, followed by a tour of the Clallam County Historical Museum.



**Saturday and Sunday, October 8-9**

*Dungeness Crab and  
Seafood Festival on City Pier*

Sign up for a shift in the OCNMS booth or the OCDC. Last volunteer opportunity of the year!

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### Thank You, Volunteers!

*Volunteers are the only human beings on the face of the earth who reflect this nation's compassion, unselfish caring, patience, and just plain love for one another. ~ Erma Bombeck*

A very special "Thank You" to everyone who helped out in the Olympic Coast Discovery Center this summer, and especially during the four weeks that Jim and I were off exploring southeast Alaska. Volunteers contributed a total of 884.5 hours to Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary in June, July and August.

#### Star volunteers include:

Jim and Trish Fedderly, and Bruce and Gerri Ferguson who traveled at their own expense to Michigan to represent OCNMS in Thunder Bay. Suzanna Brock who drove to Newport, Oregon to drop off our research team for the deep sea coral cruise, and then drove to Westport to pick them up again.



### Top Discovery Center volunteers for the summer:

Sue Griffith (57 hours), Christina Rookaird (45 hours), Bruce Ferguson (39 hours), Gerri Ferguson (32 hours), Elizabeth Clark (30 hours), Carol Huard and Lisbeth Jardine (25 hours), Jim Jewell and Genie DeVine (24 hours)

### Volunteers Advisory Committee seeks new members

The OCDC volunteer advisory committee was formed about a year ago to help evaluate our training program and provide feedback about volunteer enrichment and other aspects of our volunteer program. Two committee members were too busy with other work to continue, so now we're looking for two or three new recruits to help out. Primarily this involves several meetings with OCDC staff, calling other volunteers, and assisting with social functions. If you would like to volunteer, or want more information, please call Carol Huard (452-6454) or send me an email.

### Special Volunteer News

We have several volunteers who deserve special recognition this month:

*Douglas Parks* is on his way to the University of North Carolina to study marine science on a Gates Millennium Scholarship.

*Christina Rookaird* has accepted an AmeriCorps position with Feiro Marine Life Center as their new education assistant.



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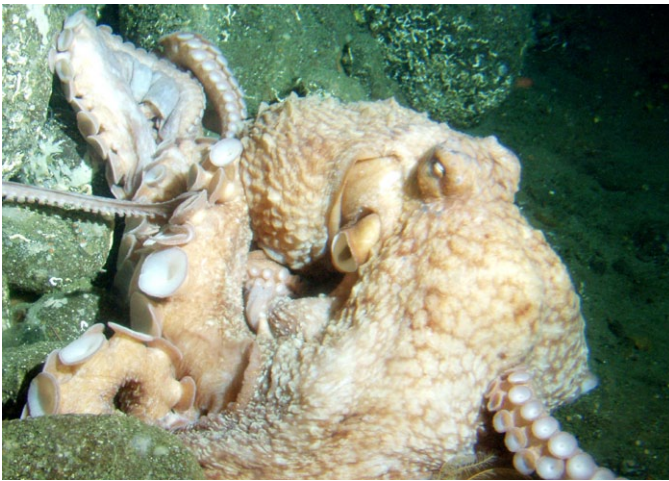
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*Veronica Ayres* received word yesterday that her book “Journal of a Wednesday Child” is published and now for sale on Amazon.com.

*Charlotte Elkins* is also busy working on a new mystery series, details available soon.



### No Mother Could Give More! Life History of the Giant Pacific Octopus

*Reported by Becky Jewell*

Jim Cosgrove of the Royal BC Museum in Victoria spoke about his underwater research on Giant Pacific Octopus on Tuesday, August 16. Highlights from his talk:

The world's largest octopus, Giant Pacific Octopus ranges from Central California to Japan. Nocturnal animals, they hunt mostly at night for crab, bivalves, fish, small mammals, and even other octopuses.

The mantle contains the internal organs including three hearts which pump blue blood, a brain that

wraps around the esophagus, a radula (tongue) and beak.



Giant Pacific Octopus are deaf and color blind, yet they can rapidly change skin color, and texture. Life expectancy is about 4 years. They breed only once at the end of their life cycle.



The female has suckers all the way down all eight arms. The male, on the third right arm, only has suckers 2/3 of the way down and a slit called the hectocotylus which is used to transfer a one meter long sperm package to the female.

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The female can keep the sperm package for a few months while it searches for a den, prepares it by blocking off the entrance with a wall of rocks and then proceeds to lay her eggs and fertilize them in string like grape clusters that hang from the ceiling of the den.

There are 200 suckers on each of the eight arms. Mr. Cosgrove said one 2 1/2 inch sucker is capable of lifting 35 lbs. GPO's taste with their suckers and almost half of their nerve cells are in the arms.



It takes anywhere from 6 to 11 months for the baby octopuses (not octopi) to come out of the egg sack. The mother octopus stays in the den all that time without eating. She takes good care of the eggs, cleaning them, oxygenating them, and in the end shaking the strings of eggs to help the babies get free of the yolk sack. She then blows them out into the water column where they become food for everything. They are only the size of a grain of rice. The female lays about 68,000 eggs. Of those, only 1 or 2 will live to reproduce.